REMARKS

The Office Action mailed December 14, 2005 has been carefully considered. The present Amendment is intended to be a complete response thereto and to place the case in condition for allowance. A Petition for a two-month extension of time and fee therefore are filed herewith.

In the Action, the Examiner withdrew the finality of the previous Office Action and entered the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) that was filed on October 25, 2005. The Examiner has rejected claim 14 (erroneously identified in the Action as claim 16) under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Dunn (USP 5,193,426) in view of Klingel (USP 4,583,719).

Claim 14 is amended to overcome the § 103 rejection. The punching machine according to the present invention has the structure where the workpiece W is moved only in the first direction (X axis). In other words, the workpiece W is not moved in the second direction (Y axis). In this connection, the working head (8, 9, 11, 25) including punches P and dies D is moved in the second direction (Y axis), as clearly defined in the currently amended fourth element clause, namely:

"a working head (8, 9, 11, 25) comprising a die block (9) having a plurality of dies (D): a punch block (11) having a plurality of punches (P); and a ram drive unit (25) wherein the die block (9), punch block (11) and the ram drive unit (25) are united in a working head (8, 9, 11, 25), the united working head (8, 9, 11, 25) being slidably mounted in the body frame so as to be unitedly positioned in the second direction (Y) to punch the workpiece (W), thereby punching the workpiece (W) along the second direction (Y) . . . ."

In contrast, the primary applied reference, Dunn (US 5,193,426), discloses a punching machine 20 including a first positioning device (86) positioning a workpiece (W) in the first direction (Y axis in Dunn, in contrast to the X axis in the present invention) and a second positioning device (no reference number denoted) positioning a workpiece (W) in the first direction (Y axis in Dunn, in contrast to the X axis in the present invention) as annotated on FIG. 1 of Dunn attached to this Amendment.

In the punching machine 20 disclosed in Dunn, the punch adaptor 124 secured to the punch support 38 and the die adaptor 126 secured to the die housing (disclosed in FIGs. 6-7 and described at Col. 2, lines 56-64 of Dunn) are *not* moved in the second direction (X axis in Dunn, in contrast to the Y axis in the present invention), as shown in FIG. 5 of Dunn. Only the punch head 22 is moved in the second direction (X axis in Dunn, in contrast to the Y axis in the present invention) by the X axis servomotor drive 27 (disclosed in FIGs. 4-5 and described at Col. 5, lines 17-20 of Dunn).

In this connection, in the punching machine 20 disclosed in Dunn, when the workpiece (W) is punched along the second direction (X axis in Dunn, in contrast to the Y axis in the present invention), a unit including the first positioning device (86) and the second positioning device shown in FIG. 8 of Dunn is moved by the motor 26 in the second direction(X axis in Dunn, in contrast to the Y axis in the present invention) together with the workpiece (W).

As a result, in the punching machine 20 disclosed in Dunn, the workpiece (W) is moved not only in the first direction (Y axis in Dunn, in contrast to the X axis in the present

invention) but also in the second direction (X axis in Dunn, in contrast to the Y axis in the present invention). Therefore, the structure disclosed in Dunn is different from the structure according to the present invention.

Next, the other applied reference, Klingel (US 4,583,719) discloses a similar punching machine 1 to the punching machine 20 disclosed in Dunn. When the workpiece (18) is punched along a first direction (X) as annotated in FIG. I of Klingel attached to this Amendment, a first positioning device (34,35) and a second positioning device (15) is moved by the motor in the first direction (X) together with the workpiece (18).

In the punching machine 1 disclosed in Klingel, when the workpiece (18) is punched along a second direction (Y), carriages (31,44) are moved by the motor 7 in the second direction (Y) together with the workpiece.

As a result, in the punching machine 1 disclosed in Klingel, the workpiece (W) is moved not only in the first direction (X) but also in the second direction (Y), as described at Col. 2, lines 27-30 of Klingel. Therefore, the structure disclosed in Klingel is also different from the structure according to the present invention.

Referring back to the explanation of the punching machine according to the present invention, according to the structure the punching machine where the workpiece W is moved only in the first direction (X axis) and where the workpiece W is not moved in the second direction (Y axis), even in case that the workpiece (W) would be a material which is uncoiled from a coil, the coil (which may weigh five to ten tons) is not required to be moved in the second direction (Y). In this connection, additional facilities to position the coil in the second direction (Y) are not required, thereby decreasing manufacturing cost of the whole facilities for punching the workpiece (W).

In contrast, if a material which is uncoiled from a coil is punched in the punching machine 20 disclosed in Dunn or in the punching machine 1 disclosed in Klingel, additional expensive facilities to position the coil in the second direction (X axis in Dunn, Y axis in Klingel) are required. Thus, the structure of the claimed invention is entirely different from that of the two applied references. No *prima facie* case of obviousness is made out. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection are respectfully requested.

The Office Action has been fully addressed. Entry of this Amendment and issuance of a Notice of Allowance of claim 14, as now presented, are respectfully solicited.

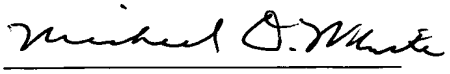
In the event that there are any questions relating to this Amendment or the application in general, it would be appreciated if the examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney concerning such questions so that the prosecution of this application may be expedited.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to BLANK ROME LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (000004-00661). A Petition for a two month extension of time is filed concurrently with this Amendment. In the event that a petition for extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this response, Applicants hereby petition under C.F.R. 1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely.

Any fees dues are authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

Morikatsu MATSUDA et al.

By: 

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Enclosures: Annotated FIG. 1 of Dunn (US 5,193,426)
Annotated FIG. 1 of Klingel (US 4,583,719)

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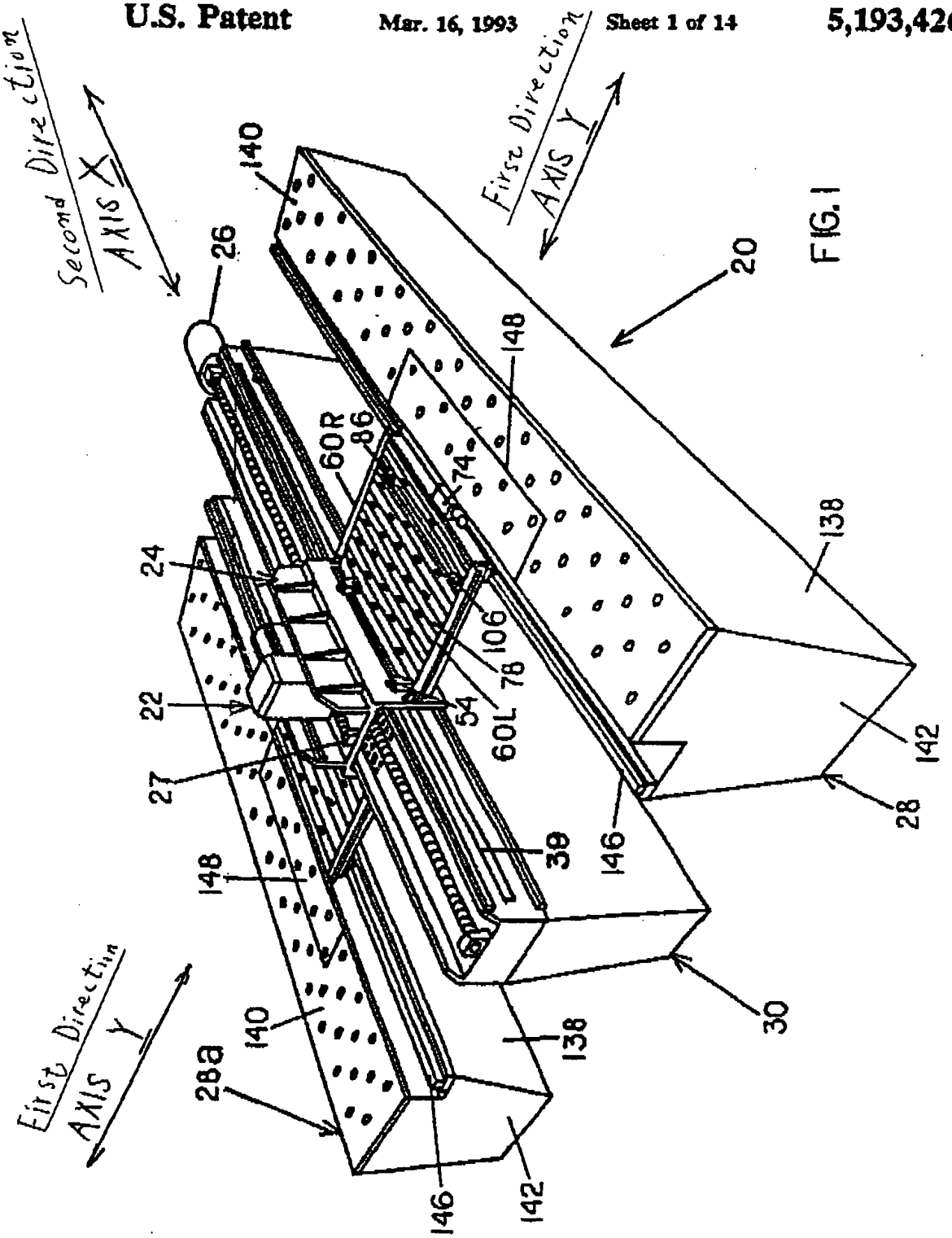

FIG. 1

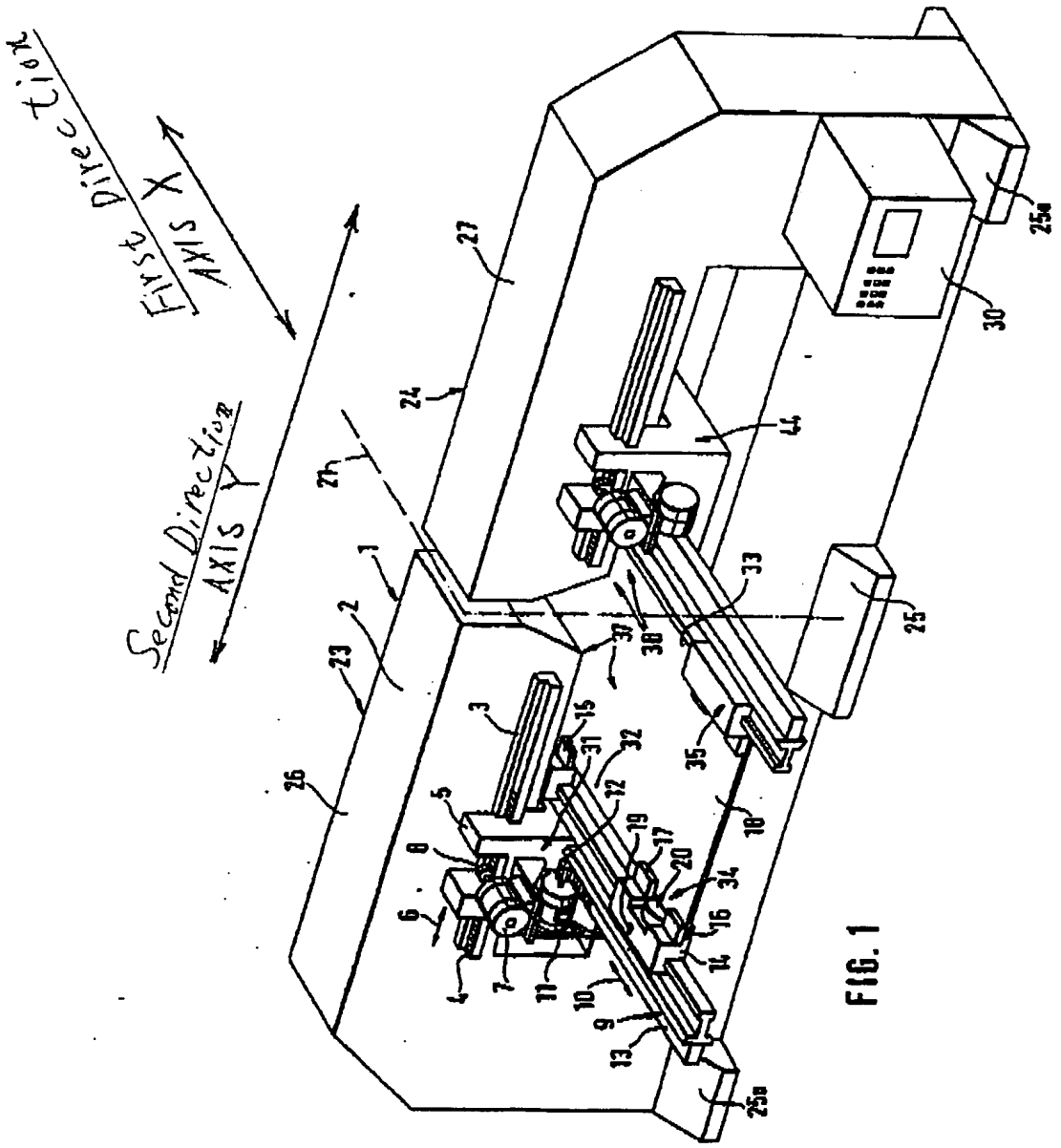

FIG. 1